

## AN INTELLECTUAL PIANIST

RACHMANINOFF SCORNS DISPLAY,  
BUT DARES TO THINK.

His Recital at Shubert Offers New  
Sensation to Music Lovers—Pro-  
gram Almost Entirely  
of Etudes.

Everything the virtuoso aims to be, that Sergei Rachmaninoff is not. Tall, somewhat stooped and a little awkward, he is a figure that suggests a hermitage rather than the footlights. With a technical resource as rich probably as any pianist that ever came out of Russia, he subordinates it to the extent almost of scorning it. And yet, without have brought to the audience at the Shubert yesterday so vivid an impression of the musing melancholy of his race.

The melancholy of Russia has come to us in many art forms, but never before so completely divested of conscious beauty, and yet so powerful to move. Rachmaninoff begins where those of a different mental caliber leave off. He has the detachment of creative genius, the somber temperament, the quietness and power. He is purposely rugged at times in order to achieve a greater directness of musical speech.

### CHOPIN TO RACHMANINOFF.

The B minor sonata of Chopin was fraught with character. It was both powerful and plastic and disclosed the pianist's love of the melodic line. He played four Chopin etudes, passing from their youth and brightness to four of his own, which are as old as the others are young, as self-contained as the others are frank. It was in these etudes the audience first glimpsed the mystic who wrote "The Isle of the Dead," inspired by Boecklin's famous picture of the name, but a work Kansas City may not hear while it is without a symphony orchestra. The etudes were richly emotional, full of imagination, the subdued passages suggesting the phantom voices of the symphonic poem.

In the audience were many young persons, more than in any other recital this season. They had come partly to hear the composer play his prelude—their prelude, which every student cherishes. He played it, and some of the young persons may have been a little shocked to find that it didn't sound wholly familiar. And yet it was less changed than some of the Chopin etudes and the waltz played as encore. Even the Paderewski minuet emerged with new perspectives and a great deal of unsuspected charm.

### MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.

It is quite impossible to hear anything that sounds thoroughly familiar in a Rachmaninoff recital. "Dance of the Gnomes" by Liszt became a bit of indaring movement against a still background that one saw as well as heard the queer little earth creatures. The Campanella presented some entirely new planes of sound, losing so much of its machine made glitter that it seemed worthy of a place on a self-respecting program. It whirred, of course, but so smoothly and softly that the melody was paramount.

It was interesting to note that this man who somehow suggests in his general appearance no less a figure than Abraham Lincoln, bears a certain character likeness to the Great American, in that he passes over all that is petty. In all his interpretations he emphasized simplicity, subordinated all that was offered merely for display and succeeded in reading into every composition something broad and fine and wholesome. With all his power he was never noisy and with all the demands made upon his technical resources he seemed to have more in reserve than most pianists display.

### AN IMPROVISED ENCORE.

In one of his encores—the one following his prelude—the pianist gave the impression of improvising, as in fact he was, using one of his songs as a theme around which to weave a colorful setting. He played Tchaikowski's "Trigolka" and at the last, third in a series of encores, he played his own "Polichinelle."

In the audience were many musicians from neighboring towns.

M. K. P.